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(6902)

UGANDA
(Population: 10 million)

I. BACKGROUND

On January 25, 1971, General Idi Amin overthrew President Milton Obote of Uganda. This triggered a purge of Obote's tribal kinsmen in the army and eventually led to the ouster or death of nearly all non-commissioned officers in the security forces. As a result, an unruly army has terrorized the country.

General Amin himself is uneducated, irresponsible, paranoiac and racist. He has ordered the expulsion of 55,000 non-Ugandan Asians. He earlier expelled the Israelis in order to please the Arabs. Amin now thinks the UK, Israel and at times, the US, want his overthrow. The anti-Israeli aspect has become increasingly intense and adds a dangerous focus in the situation.

The present fighting began on September 17, when several hundred Obote supporters, who had taken refuge in Tanzania, attacked Amin's forces in southern Uganda. This was expected to lead to a popular rising against Amin but did not.

2. HUMAN TOLL

There have possibly been 4,000 to 5,000 tribal killings (Obote supporters) since Amin came to power. Casualty figures for the latest fighting are unknown but they do not exceed a few hundred.

3. FORCES INVOLVED

a. Internal. Amin is strictly a domestic product. He has had little more than vocal support from the Arabs.

b. African

-- Tanzania clearly favors Obote's supporters and has armed them.

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-- Libya has promised financial aid to Uganda, but, so far, none seems to have materialized.

-- Most Africans consider Amin to be mad.

c. Non-African

-- Neither the USSR nor PRC are behind Uganda's problems.

-- The UK has maintained its important economic assistance notwithstanding Amin's actions against them. They fear what termination of their aid would do to their 7,000 nationals.

4. OUTLOOK

Amin is riding high after having repulsed the Obote invaders. He may try to take revenge on the Asians or UK, whom he blames for the invasion. Economically, the country is almost bankrupt and the expulsion of Asians is bound to make matters worse.

5. UNITED STATES ROLE

a. Interests. Our interests there are negligible but we have traditionally aided Uganda in order to foster East African stability.

b. Safety of Americans. Amin has said that Europeans (i.e., whites) would make good targets for his army if an attempt is made to unseat him. Such an attempt was just made, but foreigners did not suffer unduly. One Peace Corpsman died near the area of hostilities but this was accidental. Nonetheless, Amin's repeated threats against Europeans are real and no one can assume this irrational man might not act violently against Americans. As a result, State is trying to bring in US personnel from the countryside to Kampala. After this is accomplished, a partial evacuation from Kampala will be considered.

c. Future Plans. Preparation of evacuation program.

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6. ACTION RECOMMENDED

a. Instruct the African NSC Interdepartmental Group to prepare a contingency study on an urgent basis which would focus on:

- (1) recommendations for the withdrawal of Americans from Uganda;
- (2) the termination of assistance programs there, in a way which would not further endanger our people;
- (3) responses to a deteriorating situation resulting in reprisals against non-Africans (whites -- possibly including US but more likely UK citizens -- and Asians);
- (4) actions in the event the GOU refused to allow US or UK citizens to depart;
- (5) responses in the event the UK asks for help in evacuating its citizens (7,000) or Asians, or both.

Agree _____ Disagree _____.

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